

## Message Text

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ACTION NEA-06

INFO OCT-01 SS-14 ISO-00 NSC-05 NSCE-00 PM-03 SP-02 L-01

SAM-01 SAB-01 IO-03 INR-05 CIAE-00 DODE-00 EB-03

DLOS-03 SAL-01 /049 W

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R 120710Z APR 76

FM AMEMBASSY DOHA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1425

INFO AMEMBASSY ABU DHABI

AMEMBASSY JIDDA

AMEMBASSY KUWAIT

AMEMBASSY MANAMA

AMEMBASSY MUSCAT

AMEMBASSY TEHRAN

C O N F I D E N T I A L DOHA 0401

LIMDIS

KUWAIT PASS BAGHDAD

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, QA, BA

SUBJ: QATAR-BAHRAIN RELATIONS: HWAR ISLAND DISPUTE

REF: DOHA 0378, DOHA 0384

1. SUMMARY: AMIR OF QATAR'S ADVISOR HAS BROUGHT US UP TO DATE ON GOQ POSITION ON HWAR ISLAND DISPUTE WITH BAHRAIN. QATARIS APPEAR FIRM IN THEIR INSISTENCE THAT THEIR SOVEREIGNTY OVER HWAR BE ACKNOWLEDGED AS BASIC PREREQUISITE TO ANY NEGOTIATIONS OR MEDIATION3; SAUDIS HAVE AGREED TO RENEW THEIR MEDIATING EFFORT; THEY HAVE THEIR WORK CUT OUT FOR THEM. END SUMMARY.

2. DURING APRIL 8 CONVERSATION WITH DR. HASSAN KAMEL, AMIR'S POLITICAL/DIPLOMATIC/LEGAL ADVISOR, AMBASSADOR ASKED WHETHER RECENT PUBLIC WARMING UP OF BAHRAIN-QATAR RELATIONS INDICATED  
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THAT THERE MIGHT BE SOME MOVEMENT TO SETTLE HWAR ISLAND

DISPUTE. I STATED THAT SOLE US INTEREST IN MATTER WAS THAT SUCH DISPUTES BETWEEN FRIENDLY STATES IN AREA BE SETTLED PEACEFULLY IN OUR MUTUAL INTEREST OF STABILITY IN THE GULF.

3. KAMEL ACKNOWLEDGED THAT RECENT EXCHANGES OF VISITS AND MESSAGES COULD IMPROVE ATMOSPHERE FOR SETTLEMENT OF HWAR DISPUTE. HOWEVER, HE NOTED THAT RECENT PUBLIC STATEMENT OF GOB FOREIGN MINISTER THAT THERE WAS NO DISAGREEMENT ABOUT HWAR HAD ANGERED AMIR, SINCE STATEMENT WAS READ HERE AS IMPLICATION THAT QATARIS ACCEPTED STATUS QUO.

4. KAMEL THEN VOLUNTEERED A LENGTHY BRIEFING ON HWAR DISPUTE. HE SAID HE HAD JUST PREPARED LONG MEMORANDUM DETAILING GOQ'S CASE ON SPECIFIC REQUEST OF KING KHALID WHO HAD DISCUSSED MATTER WITH BOTH QATARIS AND BAHRAINIS DURING HIS RECENT VISITS. ACCORDING KAMEGVN HIS MEMORANDUM, AND PRESUMABLY SIMILAR ONE BEING PREPARED BY GOB, WOULD BE TURNED OVER TO SAUDIS IN CONNECTION WITH SAG'S OFFER TO MEDIATE DISPUTE.

5. KAMEL MADE IT VERY CLEAR THAT SAUDIS WERE MEDIATING AND NOT RPT NOT ARBITRATING. HE SAID THAT HE HAD CAUTIONED KING KHALID, AND MORE PARTICULARLY PRINCE SAUD, THAT THIS WAS NO RUG MERCHANTING OPERATION BUT A SERIOUS MATTER IN WHICH BASIC PRINCIPLES INVOLVED. ACCORDING KAMEL, HE TOLD SAUDIS THAT ANY MEDIATION J NEGOTIATION MUST PROCEED FROM ACCEPTANCE OF BASIC FACT OF GOQ'S SOVEREIGNTY OVER HWAR WHICH CLEARLY LOCATED IN QATARI TERRITORIAL WATERS. HE CONCEDED THAT

SAUDIS, ESPECIALLY PRINCE SAUD, WERE IMPRESSED WITH HIS ARGUMENTATION AND HE EXPRESSED CONFIDENCE THAT DOCUMENTATION PROVIDED IN HIS MEMO WOULD CONCLUSIVELY CONVINCE SAUDI THAT GOQ'S CLAIM TO HWAR WAS UNASSAILABLE.

6. KAMEL STATED THAT HIS CONVICTION OF QATARI SOVEREIGNTY OVER HWAR WAS OBJECTIVELY REACHED BASED ON ALL AVAILABLE LEGAL, GEOGRAPHICAL, HISTORICAL AND LOGICAL PRECEDENTS. HE ASSERTED HE WOULD NOT HAVE ENGAGED HIMSELF AS GOQ'S ADVOCATE, REGARDLESS OF HIS PERSONAL FEELINGS, UNLESS HE HAD DETERMINED ITS CASE WAS SOUND. HE NOTED HIS OWN SUCCESS IN NEGOTIATING GOQ'S RIGHTS TO HALUL  
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ISLAND AND MEDIAN LINE ISSUES WITH IRAN AND UAE AS EVIDENCE OF HIS EXPERTISE IN SUCH MATTERS.

7. KAMEL THEN REVIEWED SOME ELEMENTS OF DISPUTE WHICH HE SAID SUPPORTED GOQ'S CLAIM. HE REITERATED THAT TERRITORIAL WATERS AGRUMENT WAS THE STRONGEST, AND IT CLEARLY RECOGNIZED IN INTERNATIONAL LAW EVEN IF CLAIM HAD NEVER BEEN ASSYDTE. NEVERTHELESS, HE SAID THAT FROM TIME OF UK BOUNDARY COMMISSION DECISION AWARDDING

HWAR TO BAHRAIN IN 1938, SUCCESSION OF QATARI RULING SHAYKHS HAD PROTESTED AWARD. HE CLAIMED THAT THE UK HAD NEVER BEEN ANXIOUS TO RECTIFY INJUSTICE DONE BECAUSE OF ITS OWN EMBARRASSMENT OVER BUM RAP IT HAD GIVEN TO QATAR, AND BECAUSE IN BYGONE DAYS IT "FAVORED" BAHRAIN OVER QATAR. EVEN SO, KAMEL SAID, BRITS HAD RECOGNIZED FAULT AND HAD AGREED THAT ISSUE SHOULD GO TO ARBITRATION, TO WHICH BAHRAIN HAD ALSO AGREED. HE SHOWED ME OCTOBER 1965 DIPLOMATIC NOTE FROM POLITICAL RESIDENCY WASHINGTON WHICH CONFIRMED THIS. HOWEVER, KAMEL SAID, BRITS QUICKLY RENEGED ON THIS AND NOW CLAIMED THEY CAN'T FIND THIS NOTE. ANOTHER SUPPORTING ELEMENT, KAMEL NOTED THAT IRAN, NEVER KNOWN FOR ITS MODESTY IN TERRITORIAL CLAIMS, HAD NEVER INCLUDED HWAR IN ITS CLAIM TO BAHRAIN.

8. KAMEL OBSERVED THAT QATARIS VERY MUCH AWARE THAT A LOT OF FACE IS INVOLVED IN HWAR DISPUTE, AND IT IS UNDERSTOOD THAT SETTLEMENT SHOULD BE OF NO WINNER-NO LOSER CHARACTER. HE SAID QATARIS PARTICULARLY SENSITIVE TO DIPLOMACY OF SHAYKH ISA'S POSITION AND NEED TO PROVIDE DIGNITY-SAVING FORMULA FOR HIM. HOWEVER, HE REITERATED INSISTENCE THAT ANY NEGOTIATIONS OR MEDIATION BEGIN WITH ACCEPTANCE OF QATAR'S SOVEREIGNTY OVER HWAR AND IN THIS SENSE HE SAID QATARI POSITION "INTRANSIGENT".

9. KAMEL EXPLAINED THAT ONCE QATARI RIGHT WAS ACKNOWLEDGED, GOODY BOX WOULD BE OPENED FOR GOB. HE COMMENTED THAT IF IT WERE TERRITORY THAT GOB WANTED, GOQ WOULD BUILD BAHRUINIS AN ARTIFICIAL ISLAND TO REPLACE HWAR. IN ADDITION, QATARIS WILLING TO FINANCE CAUSEWAY BETWEEN THE TWO COUNTRIES. ACCORDING KAMEL, GENEROUS LONG-TERM, SOFT DEVELOPMENT LOANS, INVESTMENT IN GOB PROJECTS AND MANY OTHER ECONOMIC BENEFITS WOULD BE AVAILABLE TO BAHRAIN IF IT SEES NOT ONLY THE LIGHT BUT THE TRUTH.

10. RE NEXT STEPS, KAMEL SAID IT IS PRESENT GOQ POSITION TO  
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LEAVE HWAR DISPUTE IN HANDS OF SAUDIS TO SEE HOW THEY WILL DO. HE EXPRESSED HOPE THAT PRESENT DETENTE ATMOSPHERE IN GULF AND RECENT SOLUTIONS OF OTHER REGIONAL TERRITORIAL DISPUTES WOULD CATALYZE SITUATION. HE REPEATED, HOWEVER, THAT SHOULD CASE EVER GO TO INTERNATIONAL ARBITRATION, FAVORABLE OUTCOME FOR QATAR IS ASSURED, WHICH IS PRINCIPAL REASON WHY BAHRAIN HAS AVOIDED THIS.

11. COMMENT: IT APPEARS THAT SAUDIS HAVE THEIR WORK CUT OUT FOR THEM. WE RECALL PRINCE SAUD'S COMMENTARY TO AMBASSADOR SEVERAL MONTHS AGO ON GREAT DISTANCE BETWEEN QATAR AND BAHRAIN POSITIONS ON HWAR DISPUTE. FROM KAMEL'S ACCOUNT OF THE PRESENT SITUATION, IT SEEMS THAT THIS DISTANCE HAS NOT BEEN NARROWED. HOPEFULLY A RENEWED SAUDI EFFORT MAY MOVE PARTIES CLOSER TOGETHER.  
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## Message Attributes

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